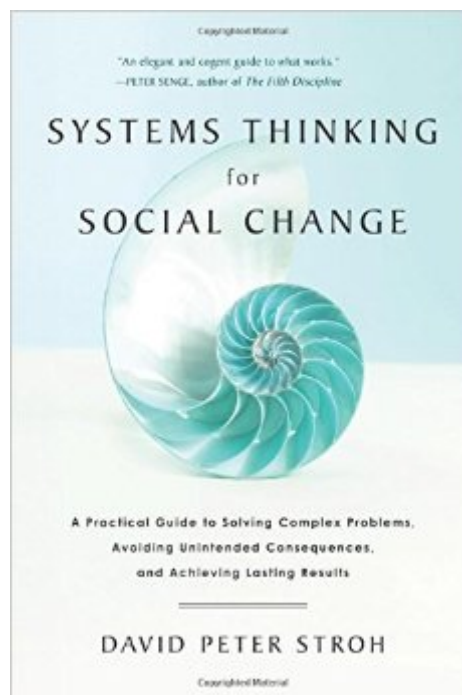


The book was found

Systems Thinking For Social Change: A Practical Guide To Solving Complex Problems, Avoiding Unintended Consequences, And Achieving Lasting Results



Synopsis

Donors, leaders of nonprofits, and public policy makers usually have the best of intentions to serve society and improve social conditions. But often their solutions fall far short of what they want to accomplish and what is truly needed. Moreover, the answers they propose and fund often produce the opposite of what they want over time. We end up with temporary shelters that increase homelessness, drug busts that increase drug-related crime, or food aid that increases starvation. How do these unintended consequences come about and how can we avoid them? By applying conventional thinking to complex social problems, we often perpetuate the very problems we try so hard to solve, but it is possible to think differently, and get different results. *Systems Thinking for Social Change* enables readers to contribute more effectively to society by helping them understand what systems thinking is and why it is so important in their work. It also gives concrete guidance on how to incorporate systems thinking in problem solving, decision making, and strategic planning without becoming a technical expert. Systems thinking leader David Stroh walks readers through techniques he has used to help people improve their efforts to end homelessness, improve public health, strengthen education, design a system for early childhood development, protect child welfare, develop rural economies, facilitate the reentry of formerly incarcerated people into society, resolve identity-based conflicts, and more. The result is a highly readable, effective guide to understanding systems and using that knowledge to get the results you want.

Book Information

Paperback: 264 pages

Publisher: Chelsea Green Publishing (October 16, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 160358580X

ISBN-13: 978-1603585804

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars See all reviews (33 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #15,084 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Non-Governmental Organizations #5 in Books > Science & Math > Physics > System Theory #6 in Books > Business & Money > Small Business & Entrepreneurship > Nonprofit Organizations & Charities

Customer Reviews

I enjoyed reading this book for a number of reasons. First, it is easy to follow. David Peter Stroh includes definitions of terms in plain English so I can understand difficult systems terms like structures, archetypes, and balancing and reinforcing loops. He also often provides three different levels of explanation for concepts - a brief overview, a contextual explanation, and a more detailed example. This works well for my learning style because I need to understand the theory and the practice in order to apply these ideas to my own work. Second, the book is filled with case stories. These examples underscore the value of systems thinking, for instance, by identifying unintended consequences of change efforts that don't consider the whole system or by pointing out counter intuitive ways to shift a system. I also like Stroh's idea of helping people see how they contribute to the status quo and how they can change their behaviors to contribute to innovative solutions. This book includes many real life stories of this, and I'm excited to try out the techniques he shares to move people to collective action. Third, throughout the book, David Peter Stroh includes many tools that I can use as stand alone tools for change initiatives. These include things like the iceberg tool or conversation questions. Even if I don't go through a full change initiative, the tools can be used to help people rethink what is happening and what can be done to get to different results. Finally, and most importantly, I appreciate that this book is written about social change. Much of the systems thinking writing is very academic and grounded in specific disciplines like public health, economics, etc. Often, this writing focuses at the organizational or institutional level.

We need a better way of making sense of the complex problems of our modern world if we are going to bring about any kind of meaningful and lasting social change. The current linear, cause and effect, blame-laden way of seeing and understanding issues no longer works with these multi-relational, multi-faceted social dilemmas. Systems Theory provides a more wholistic way of looking at and understanding the dynamics of these problems. Past writing about systems thinking tends toward the academic and is often not very accessible, or the author uses mostly examples of natural systems, making it difficult to translate those systems principles to human/social systems. David Stroh's *Systems Thinking for Social Change*, overcomes both of those problems. Because of his real world examples of social issues seen through a systems lens, the book draws the reader in as Stroh narrates the story of an issue's complexity. Problems like prison release and recidivism, health care, and affordable housing seem like tightly woven knots, impossible to untie, as we initially approach them. But as Stroh begins to diagram the elements of the problem and their relationships, the knot begins to unravel and understanding begins to emerge about potential places to intervene in the system for maximum effect. I've read many books on systems dynamics and modeling,

and Strohâ™s is one of the best at leading the reader through the step-by-step process of creating a model of a problem. He doesnâ™t overwhelm with too much information or too many technical terms. He keeps the reader focused on the issue and learning about diagramming unfolds as the issue is tweezed apart. The result is that the reader comes away understanding systems thinking and not just how to draw causal loop diagrams.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

Systems Thinking For Social Change: A Practical Guide to Solving Complex Problems, Avoiding Unintended Consequences, and Achieving Lasting Results
What Happened to Goldman Sachs: An Insider's Story of Organizational Drift and Its Unintended Consequences
The Logical Thinking Process: A Systems Approach to Complex Problem Solving
Dating and the Single Parent: * Are You Ready to Date? * Talking With the Kids * Avoiding a Big Mistake * Finding Lasting Love
The Power of Negative Thinking: An Unconventional Approach to Achieving Positive Results
The Joy of Eating Well: A Practical Guide to- Transform Your Relationship with Food- Overcome Emotional Eating- Achieve Lasting Results
The Kid's Guide to Social Action: How to Solve the Social Problems You Choose-And Turn Creative Thinking into Positive Action
Practical Problems in Mathematics for Heating and Cooling Technicians (Practical Problems In Mathematics Series)
Solving Problems with Design Thinking: Ten Stories of What Works (Columbia Business School Publishing)
Solving Problems with Design Thinking: Ten Stories of What Works
No B.S. Guide to Direct Response
Social Media Marketing: The Ultimate No Holds Barred Guide to Producing Measurable, Monetizable Results with Social Media Marketing
Achieving TABE Success In Language, Level E Workbook (Achieving TABE Success for TABE 9 & 10)
The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society
A Practical Guide to Solving Preschool Behavior Problems, 5E
Bread Illustrated: A Step-By-Step Guide to Achieving Bakery-Quality Results At Home
Change the Culture, Change the Game: The Breakthrough Strategy for Energizing Your Organization and Creating Accountability for Results
Social Media: Master, Manipulate, and Dominate Social Media Marketing With Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and LinkedIn (Social Media, Social Media ... Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, Pinterest)
Women Don't Ask: The High Cost of Avoiding Negotiation--and Positive Strategies for Change
Social Intelligence: A Practical Guide to Social Intelligence: Communication Skills - Social Skills - Communication Theory - Emotional Intelligence - Social Security & Medicare Facts 2016: Social Security Coverage, Maximization Strategies for Social Security Benefits, Medicare/Medicaid, Social Security Taxes, Retirement & Disability, Ser

[Dmca](#)